Program Site Address Data Governance: Verification, Display, and Maintenance

November 2026

Purpose

This document establishes the governance framework for program site address data as it flows from the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) or other data collection mechanisms related to this project such as Smartsheet forms to any spatial analyses or mapping products derived from it. It defines procedures for three interconnected activities:

1. **Researching the correct address and service location** - verifying that program site addresses on record are accurate and report accurately whether the site reflects actual service delivery and/ or housing/ shelter (inventory) locations;
2. **How programs are mapped** - applying consistent, principled standards for how those addresses are displayed in public-facing and partner-facing products; and
3. **Maintaining and updating program location data** - maintaining address data over time as programs change, new errors are identified, or providers request updates.

Researching the Correct Address and Service Location

In February 2026, R&D staff conducted a comprehensive review and correction of all program site addresses on record in HMIS. This work addressed two related but distinct problems: addresses were often entered as agency administrative locations rather than actual program sites where services are delivered, and even when an address was present, it was not always clear whether it reflected the program's true service delivery location.

The HMIS field *Project Location* within the Project Descriptor Model is intended to capture the primary program site address, as defined by HUD Project Descriptor data element 2.03.[1] In practice, this field has not been consistently or reliably populated, meaning a recorded address may reflect a mailing address, PO box, or administrative office rather than where clients actually access services, shelter, or housing.

As *project location* addresses were corrected through this review, R&D added the *inventory site* field to our location data table to provide clear information on the quality of the location address.

Inventory Site Definition: A location where someone can sit, stay, or sleep. Common examples include Day Centers, Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing projects.

The steps outlined below reflect the February 2026 review process followed for address correction and verification.

1. Checked the sponsoring agency's website for a publicly listed program address, confirmed the page had been updated within the past year, and verified against Google Maps.
2. If no address was found, searched related sources such as news articles, blogs, or posts from other agencies or government entities, applying the same one-year recency standard and verifying against Google Maps. If still uncertain, checked King County public tax records to match property owners or managers.
3. If online research did not yield a reliable result and the program was not subject to location suppression, contacting agency staff directly was available as a last resort. This step was not necessary during the review.

Sensitive Population Programs

Programs serving people fleeing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, human trafficking, or other sensitive situations were handled separately and were not subject to standard address verification or public display. For these programs, R&D verified the headquarters address only and made no attempt to locate an actual program site. If no public headquarter address

[1] *HUD HMIS Data Dictionary Project Descriptor 2.03 Continuum of Care Information defines Project locations as the following. The fields, Geocode, Project Zip Code and Project Street Address fields must reflect the location of the project's principal lodging site or, for the multiple site projects, the area in which most of the project's clients are housed. Tenant-based scattered site projects and Victim Service Providers (VSPs) are only required to complete the geocode and Zip Code fields and may use mailing or administrative address information if they wish to complete the remainer of the address fields.*

information was available, R&D defaulted to whatever address the provider had entered in HMIS. Administrative addresses in this case may be PO Boxes.

Programs were flagged as sensitive when the program name or website description indicated that the service population consisted of persons fleeing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, human trafficking, or similar circumstances. When in doubt, R&D erred on the side of caution and considered them a Sensitive Population Program

Maintaining Verified Addresses

R&D maintains a separate verified address table[2] linking corrected program site addresses to their unique HMIS program identification codes (Program IDs).[3] This table serves as the authoritative source for all address data for HMIS participating programs used in any R&D spatial analysis or mapping products.

How Programs Are Mapped

Mapping is the process of displaying address location information on a data product such as a map or table. Not all program types can or should be mapped in the same way. The appropriate mapping method for a given program depends on three factors: whether a verified site address exists, whether displaying that address publicly raises privacy or safety concerns, and whether providing exact address information provides value to our public. Together, these determine what R&D uses as the default map location for each program type, as well as what alternative representations are available.

Six location display modes are used across program types for mapping decisions. In order from most to least geographically precise: *inventory site* (the verified program address), *obscured site* (the program address buffered or shifted to protect exact location), *agency headquarters*, *obscured headquarters*, *service area centroid (service radius which allows us to place a point that represents where most services are delivered (i.e. outreach programs for example)*, and *not mapped*. To provide the best information and access for clients, providers, assessors, and other community partners, more precise representations are preferred when data quality and privacy considerations allow.

[2] *https://kcrhaorg.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/CommunityImpact/Shared Documents/General/Data Hub Folder/SQL Table Development and Documentation/Program_Attributes/program_addresses_by_pID.xlsx*

[3] The two HMIS fields from which primary program site address data is drawn are from the HMIS Data Standards *2.03 Continuum of Care Information*: primary_programs_geolocations.address and sites_geolocations.address (Project Descriptor Model table and column name in Looker).

The *Location Display Mode Mapping Table* below summarizes the default and available mapping methods for each program type:

✗ = method is not possible or not permitted (sensitive locations)
⚠ = technically possible but raises ethical or privacy concerns and should be used with caution
✓ = method is available
✓default = indicates what R&D uses by default

Location Display Mode Mapping Table

Program Type	Service Site Address Available?	Inventory Site	Obscured Inventory Site	Agency HQ	Obscured Agency HQ	Service Area Centroid	Not mapped
Sensitive Population Program	***No***	✗	✗	⚠	✓	✓	✓default
Day Shelter **Night-By-Night Shelter** **Coordinated Entry** **Services Only**	***Yes***	✓default	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	No	✗	✗	✓default	✓	✓	✓
Entry Exit Shelter **Transitional Housing** **Permanent Housing Project** **Homelessness Prevention** **Other**	***Yes***	⚠	✓default	✓	✓	✓	✓
	No	✗	✗	✓default	✓	✓	✓
Outreach	***No***	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓default	✓

Services Only, Prevention, Outreach, and Other are not currently included in the RSD

Day Shelters, Night-By-Night Shelters, some Entry/Exit Shelters and Coordinated Entry accept walk-in clients and benefit from precise public location information. These default to mapping the inventory site when available. Housing programs such as Permanent Supportive Housing and some Emergency programming such as such as Entry/Exit Shelter and Transitional Housing are referral-only, meaning there is no operational reason to display an exact site address publicly, and doing so may expose client locations unnecessarily. These programs default to an obscured address when a site is recorded and fall back to agency headquarters otherwise. Programs serving domestic violence survivors are never mapped at the site level regardless of what is recorded in HMIS, given the safety risks of disclosing locations serving survivors of violence or trafficking. Agencies have the option to map their address *more* specifically if they desire to do so, with the exception of programs serving DV survivors. This process is outlined below in the Provider-Initiated Updates to RSD section.

Obtaining Addresses of New Programs

Programs in the RSD fall into one of two "pathways" of data collection:

Pathway 1 - HMIS-participating programs with Live Inventory configured. This represents all active HMIS-participating residential or shelter projects except Night-by-Night shelters. All RSD data, including addresses, are collected within the HMIS project setup process. Addresses are collected within the Live Inventory Site screen

The Data System Coordinator runs a scheduled Look every Friday to identify any HMIS projects added in the last 90 days and fills in the address book using the address information from Looker (or other online resources as outlined above). The Look includes any program added in the last 90 days to ensure there is ample opportunity for the Data System Coordinator to add the new program in the event they are out of office immediately after program creation.

Pathway 2: Programs that do not participate in HMIS and HMIS-participating programs without Live Inventory (such as NbN, CE, day shelter, and eventually services only and outreach)

Pathway 2 providers wishing to add their program to the RSD submit a New Program Request Form. In the form, they indicate if they primarily serve clients fleeing DV, in which case address information is not collected. In all other cases, providers supply the following address information:

- Street Address
- City
- Zip Code

- Address Type - Does the address provided represent the site where services are provided?
    - Yes
    - No
- Mapping Preference
    - Show exact program address
    - Obscure the exact address to a 5-block radius
    - Do not show program site address

When the new program form is submitted, an automated email from Smartsheet gets sent to the Data Systems Coordinator prompting them to review the new address and update the verified address table accordingly. *Address Type* and *Mapping Preference* in the form map to *Inventory_Site* and *LocationDisplayRule* respectively in the address book. The street address, city, and zip code are run through a script to complete the remaining subregional and spatial address book columns.

Maintaining and Updating Program Location Data

Program location data for all programs are maintained in the verified address table on SharePoint. These data are loaded into the program_attribute table in the KCRHA Data Hub, which is the system of record for program data across the homelessness response system and the authoritative source for all RSD mapping products. Updates to program addresses can be sent directly to the Data Systems Coordinator (joel.bernstein@kcrha.org), or they can come through via an HMIS change request. **In both scenarios, the address in the address book gets updated by the Data Systems Coordinator. If the change comes via an HMIS request, the address will also be updated in HMIS.**

Provider-Initiated Updates to RSD

Providers and agencies may request changes to how their programs are represented in mapping products at any time. They can do so by either submitting an RSD Program Update Request Form or by emailing the Data Systems Coordinator directly (joel.bernstein@kcrha.org). When the form is submitted with "Update Address Information" selected, an automated email is sent to Joel prompting review and follow up.

Providers can request:

- Update/corrections to street address
- Switch to or from using admin address in RSD (*Inventory_Site)*
- Changes to how precisely a program is mapped (*LocationDisplayRule*)
- Exclusion of a program from the RSD

Upon receiving a request, R&D will independently verify the proposed change using the same sources described in the address verification process above before updating the verified address table. This is to ensure a uniform review process, and to ensure accuracy of the information before being published. To maintain a historical record, address updates are documented in the address table via a comment in that row.

Suppression Requests

Programs serving sensitive populations are suppressed from site-level display by default as described above. For all other programs, suppression requests can be submitted via an email to the Data Systems Coordinator. Pathway 2 programs can also submit a RSD Program Update Request Form. Data will be removed from the RSD in the next update, which occurs on Monday mornings. Updates to address display settings are noted as comments in the address table.

Annual HIC Address Validation

In addition to the processes in place to capture new and updated addresses at the time of the change, the Data Management Team will confirm the accuracy of program addresses when outreaching agencies for the annual Housing Inventory Count (HIC). The HIC includes all active housing and shelter projects in King County, including those that do not participate in HMIS.